

NIGHTFALL

FREE

An Agitational Newspaper

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WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

On June 17th, 2017 Officer Jeronimo Yanez was let off the hook by a majority white jury after murdering Philando Castile in cold blood. Obviously, the verdict was devastating, cruel and absolutely absurd. Most of all, though, it was unsurprising. That night over two thousand people took to the streets in the Twin Cities. Tensions were high and so was energy from the growing crowd. Young people came out by the hundreds, clad in masks and armed with anger.

Earlier in the day, on a video posted to social media, Philando's mother Valerie Castile tore in to the verdict and the police:

"They murdered my motherfucking son with his seat belt on. So what does that say to you? Now they got free reign to keep killing us any kind of way they want to. So I just want to say one thing to everybody out there, I don't give a fuck what you do. Do what your heart desires... Fuck the police!... I hope that mother fucker die tonight."

Inside: Thoughts on Community Policing, Graffiti, and more!

EDITORIAL

And yet, as in demonstrations time and time again before that night, a somewhat small group of Black Lives Matter organizers led the massive crowd in a winding route around the city of St. Paul and ultimately, via an orchestrated effort, onto Interstate 94. Police, in communication with organizers, quickly re-routed traffic to flow far around the people standing on the highway. During the march, liberal-minded activists and their dutiful 'white allies' shouted at and shamed people expressing their anger through graffiti, and in some instance even attempted to turn them in to the authorities.

Accusations of "violence" flew, along with claims that "that's not what this is about," even after Valerie Castile explicitly called for people to express their anger in whichever manner their heart desired. People donning masks in order to avoid further police repression and information doxxing by the far-right were called "cowards" and "instigators". It almost seemed like these people had forgotten that a man's life was taken by the state, and that earlier that day it had been made clear that officers who do the same thing in the future will not be punished. But somehow writing on a traffic sign to remember and avenge Philando Castile is considered "violence".

At the end of the night, as the crowds trickled out and went home, police moved in and arrested 18 people. The police were careful not to let crowds gather on the pedestrian bridge or along the side of the highway, from where volleys of rocks and fireworks seemed to originate last July when I-94 was first shut down following Philando's murder.

The State should consider itself lucky that the city was not in flames after the verdict came out. There is a process of silencing that is occurring that is enacted not by the police departments or National Guard but by the very organizers of such rallies as well as some of the attendees. One in which a young person who fears for their life in the face of police violence is held to unrealistic and ahistorical standards of respectability towards public property and corporate shop windows. Where the dispossessed are still expected to take orders from the wealthiest and loudest non-profit voices. One where they are commanded to politely ask the slave owners to give up their plantation.

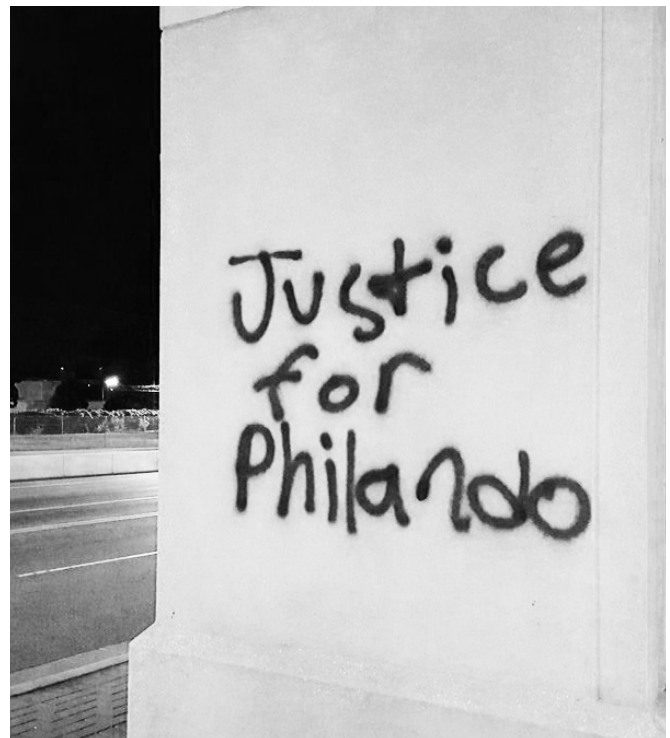
The marching, the signs, and the chants aren't enough. They never were. It's time to put the 'peace police' to rest, and to make the State fear our strength instead of re-routing traffic for us. The white supremacist police institution of the United States has a vested interest in getting away with shooting black folks, and it is clear that until it faces consequences for its actions it won't stop killing.

NIGHTFALL number eight. It feels crazy to write those words but we passed the one year mark last issue and now we are excited to dive in to our second year of providing a locally-focused platform for not only scathing critiques of all of the bullshit we face in our daily lives but also histories, instructional guides, potato jokes and more.

At times it has felt like we are punting our words into a void, but the warm feedback we have occasionally received here and there as well as the continued ramping up of the turbulence which originally inspired this project have made it clear that there is a place for a paper like this within a larger culture of resistance.

So here it is, number eight. It's a little lighter than previous issues; what can we say other than that we've been busy? We've never desired to be journalists or writers above and outside of all of the other activities we find ourselves engaged in as we struggle to get free. Thinking and writing about struggles happening locally and globally is only worthwhile if it is a means towards deepening and refining our collective approach to life, and obviously to have anything worth writing about requires putting down pen and paper and stepping out into the world where new bonds can be formed and ideas can be put to the test.

We hope that in at least some small way this project has been helpful for those who desire more than the nightmare that this world offers us.



WITH COMMUNITIES LIKE THESE...

At the risk of repeating ourselves a bit we want to take some time to talk about the concept of 'community policing'. It's a phrase that has been around a while, but it has recently seen an upsurge in popularity as those in power attempt to shore up their legitimacy in the face of the tumultuous revolts of the past few years. For example, when Fortune Magazine named then-MPD Chief Janee Harteau one of the top leaders in the world, it specifically cited her emphasis on community policing as a major accomplishment. Months later, when Harteau was driven out by Mayor Betsy Hodges in an attempt to head-off the outrage that threatened to boil over following the murder of Justine Damond by MPD officer Mohamed Noor, Hodges stated that Harteau had in fact not gone far enough in cultivating "community trust in policing", and stated that Harteau's successor would need to make community policing a top priority of the department.



So what is community policing? On the surface it doesn't sound so bad, right? Aren't anarchists and abolitionists always talking about how communities should be able to resolve conflicts themselves, free from state interference? When one looks at the actual policies that are joined under the banner of community policing, however, it is clear that this is not what those in power mean when they call for a greater emphasis on community policing. Instead, community policing seeks to fulfill the traditional goals of policing through nontraditional means. Community policing serves to shore up the racist, patriarchal, ecocidal regime we live under by reinforcing the illusion that the people who are being subjected to police violence are somehow willing participants in their own oppression. Tactics such as neighborhood watches, cop meet-and-greets like National Night Out, increased representation of minorities on police forces, and the appointment of block captains and community-police liaisons allow cops to form closer relationships with those within targeted communities who might be persuaded

to support the agenda of the police as well as intelligence on those who might challenge it in one way or another. This allows the raw violence of policing to fade into the background of the social consciousness, coming out only when it is deemed absolutely necessary.

While the label 'community policing' is new, it is helpful to recognize that as a tactic it is not new at all. From the Roman Empire, which sent select children from the areas it conquered away to Rome in order to groom them to govern in accordance with Rome's interests, to the State of Missouri, which cunningly took momentum away from the fierce rebellion in Ferguson in 2014 by assigning State Trooper Ron Johnson, an African-American Ferguson native, to head the counterinsurgency, authoritarian regimes throughout history have found ways of legitimizing their violence by making it appear as if it had the approval of the 'community'. No doubt this will often be partially successful, as evidenced by the various commenters on social media who argued that now that a black man is chief it will be impossible for MPD to continue reinforcing white supremacy. Luckily not everyone has been misled, as multiple people stormed Hodges' press conference following Harteau's resignation, refusing to be pacified so easily. As Minneapolis continues to rank as the most active National Night Out participant in the country year after year, it remains vital to resist this insidious camouflaging of the brutality of policing. Through this refusal we can begin to shape the vibrant and autonomous communities that "community policing" pretends to offer.





FREESTYLE YOUR OWN LETTERS

At the beginning of the summer, we noticed that a mural painted on the side of a bike shop along Chicago Ave had been vandalized with the words “Freestyle Your Own Letters” and signed by VENSER FYOK. The mural previously depicted an innocuous variety of zoo animals riding bicycles. This happened just across the street from where Frostbeard Studio was vandalized earlier this year in an anti-gentrification attack (which we covered in an earlier issue), so it occurred to us that this particular graffiti tag would be worth examining in a larger context of art, gentrification, and crime. However, it is impossible to know the writer’s true intentions when spray painting those words on the wall—what is contained here could just be speculation.

The words themselves point to the longstanding antagonism between graffiti writers and street artists. While the latter are more prone to imagery and beautification, graffiti writers tend to embrace the supposedly criminal nature of creative destruction. Rather than conceiving of the two groups as artists who use different methods, this understanding places them on opposite sides of a battle for the city.

Murals represent a both offensive and defensive maneuver in favor of development interests. On the one hand, they beau-

tify an area, making it more appealing to incoming residents with more money and less melanin. On the other hand, they are used—sometimes explicitly—to prevent graffiti, as despite the aforementioned antagonism writers don’t often diss murals. Beyond legal murals, even street art that is technically illegal can contribute to the rebranding of an area as hip and attractive. Banksy’s work is a well known example but this could apply just as easily to any street artists whose work is easy to consume.

Tagging can have the opposite effect. The indecipherable lettering and apparent lack of meaning are alienating towards those who desire a sanitized, legible cityscape. Graffiti is essentially a public record of likely-unpunished crime, after all. And while VENSER’s lettering is without a doubt some of the best in the whole Twin Cities, by nature of its illegality it will nevertheless come off as appalling to many viewers, especially since the tag’s placement atop the mural means that buffing the tag would destroy the mural itself. Thus, we see “Freestyle Your Own Letters” as an inspiring intervention in our quaint urban warzone. Rather than offering vague artsy platitudes about ‘expressing yourself,’ VENSER seems to demand that we take action against a hostile world using whatever tools we have at hand.

GLOBAL NEWS OF RESISTANCE

FASCISM & ANTI-FASCISM

Since August 12th, everyone's been talking about "antifa", which is an abbreviation of anti-fascist. While anti-fascism has been growing in notoriety for over a year now, in tandem with Trump's electoral campaign, the last month has brought on the spotlight like never before.

So what happened August 12th? Several hundred neo-nazis, alt-righters, and other fascists gathered in Charlottesville for an unprecedented convergence rally to bring all of the different far-right groups together. Anti-fascists mobilized in order to shut down this gathering. Despite being outnumbered, the fascists were run out of the park they had assembled in and attacked on their way to their cars. The ensuing clashes involved mace, bats, and projectiles on both sides. Later in the day, another neo-nazi drove their car into a crowd of anti-fascists at high speed, killing one and injuring many more. Heather Heyer will never be forgotten.

This murder catapulted these often-ignored clashes into the mainstream spotlight. Politicians denounced fascist organizing, employers fired people identified at fascist rallies, some of the neo-nazis (including the driver of the car that killed Heather) have even been arrested on serious charges—a departure from the one-sided form repression has usually taken against anarchists and like-minded rebels. It seemed that the far-right had taken things a step too far for civil society.

The following media coverage of Charlottesville for the first time stirred sympathy for the anti-fascists amongst so-called "public opinion". Another rally organized by the far right in Boston the following weekend was only able to turn out twenty sympathizers while tens of thousands surrounded them in opposition.

Also during this time, solidarity actions of all sorts took place around the world in memory of Heather Heyer. In Minneapolis there was a spontaneous vigil and later a demonstration in addition to graffiti murals.

The weekend after the Boston rally featured two events in the Bay Area: San Francisco on Saturday, Berkeley on Sunday. In the days ahead, organizers from both rallies claimed that they were canceled. On Saturday, large rallies took place across the city as people attempted to locate the fascists. While a few dozen did appear eventually, they were soon chased out. The next day huge crowds again converged at the site of the fascist rally in downtown, including several hundred in black bloc. The black bloc was able to dismantle the barricades that had cordoned off the park and push back the police. When a couple of fascists did appear, they were quickly run out and some were beaten as they left.

While we've engaged critically with anti-fascism at length in other articles, we at NIGHTFALL know exactly which side of the barricades we stand on. However, we will always believe that in order to be truly dangerous, we must take on not only the fascists, but the entire social order itself.

More info:

itsgoingdown.org

WELCOME TO HELL

On July 7th, world leaders came together in Hamburg, Germany with the intention of holding the latest G20 summit. The summit is where a group of twenty world leaders including Trump, Merkel, Putin, Erdoğan and more meet and discuss the management of the world. That's right, they actually gave their shitty get-together the boring-ass name Group of 20, a shock to the many of us who naturally assumed G20 stood for the more honest Go Fuck Yourself 20

The night before, tens of thousands of people came together in Hamburg with the intention of making the world very difficult to manage. The demonstration was advertised under the slogan "Welcome To Hell", and a huge portion of the crowd was dressed all in black. Before the demonstration could start moving, police blocked the streets and attacked viciously. The police, their numbers swelled to 20,000 by reinforcements from across Germany, used water cannons, tear gas, pepper spray, batons and more in attempts to disperse people. Many bravely fought back, but the police were ultimately successful in breaking up the demonstration.

However, the night didn't end there. Smaller groups of several hundred escaped the attacks and took to the streets in different directions, leaving the police scrambling to contain everything. These smaller crowds wreaked havoc in various inner city neighborhoods until late into the night. While the fires were still burning, affinity groups carried out attacks across the city, burning luxury cars and attacking police stations.

As the sun rose above the city, smoke was quick to follow, as 7:00 AM demonstrations erupted in different parts of the city. Some interfered with diplomats en route to the summit, while others blocked the port and others attacked banks and stores. During the day, police repeatedly failed to contain the unrest. Clashes were seemingly nonstop until the early hours of July 8th, as militarized special forces aided police in pushing through barricaded intersections that had been held for the past twenty four hours.

On the 8th, despite the media coverage of savage rioters demolishing the innocent city of Hamburg, a hundred thousand people came to the mass demonstration planned for that morning, and a large black bloc formed in the center of the demo. When the police tried to intervene and separate the black bloc from the rest of the demonstration, the other blocs refused to be divided. This solidarity was also seen when police intervened against the Kurdish bloc, who were displaying PKK flags which are banned in Germany. The police were once again forced to back off.

Over the course of the summit, police only detained a few hundred people and by the 9th there were less than forty prisoners. In the last days of August, the first sentence was handed down to a young man from the Netherlands: over two and a half years in jail for allegedly throwing a bottle, with practically no evidence. The other trials are ongoing.

More info:

enoughisenough14.org

LOCAL ACTIONS

Early July: Anti-police graffiti appears in northeast Minneapolis.

July 8th: Graffiti is painted in solidarity with rioters in Hamburg during the G20 summit.

July 17th: Tens of thousands of mink are released from a fur farm in central Minnesota.

July 22nd: The Delta Upsilon frat house is vandalized in Minneapolis, apparently in relation to sexual assaults perpetrated by members of the frat.

July 22nd: Graffiti is painted in solidarity with J20 defendants, who are facing charges from the inauguration in D.C.

July 23rd: A new hotel under construction in Uptown is set on fire.

July 28th: Protesters in Saint Paul rally in support of Louis Hunter, who faced felony charges from last year's unrest after his cousin Philando Castile was murdered by the police. Louis's charges were dropped shortly after.

August 9th: The fourth in a series of bank robberies is carried out in Saint Paul.

August 12th: A spontaneous vigil is organized in solidarity with Heather Heyer, who was murdered by a neo-nazi in Charlottesville. Banners are displayed from the Hennepin-Lyndale pedestrian bridge.

August 13th: A graffiti mural is painted in solidarity with Heather Heyer.

August 14th: A mass demonstration marches from the Minnesota Republican Party Office in Seward to downtown. Anti-fascist stickers and graffiti appear along the route, and the Hennepin County flag outside the so-called Public Safety building is burned and replaced with an antifa flag.

Late August: Anti-fascist and anti-police graffiti is painted in northeast Minneapolis.



Anti-fascist graffiti painted in the Twin Cities

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 6th: Welcome To Hell: a report back from the rebellion against the G20 in Hamburg, Germany. *Boneshaker Books - 2002 23rd Ave S at 6:00 PM.*

September 14th: Midwest Trans Prisoner Pen Pal Project twice-monthly letter writing night. Write letters to and potentially start friendships with queer/trans prisoners in the Midwest. *Boneshaker Books - 2002 23rd Ave S at 6:00 PM.*

September 17th: Running Down The Walls 2017. Run, walk, bike or just enjoy a picnic to raise money for political prisoners. *Lake Nokomis - Bloomington Ave S & E 54th St at 2:00 PM.*

October 6th: The opening day of the Abolish Border Imperialism conference, a convergence for abolition and decolonization. The first day is a panel event featuring academics and activists from around the world. *Cowles Auditorium, Humphrey School - 301 19th Ave S at 6:00 PM.*

October 7-8th: The Abolish Border Imperialism conference continues. See the Abolition Journal website for a full schedule of talks. *Division of Indian Work - 1001 E Lake St at 9:00 AM.*

October 31st: As we wrote last year, Halloween is a lovely time of year, one with a remarkably rebellious history. From 15th century witches to the 1980's Devil's Night arsons in Detroit, it has always been a time of mischief and revolt. In the present, it's a day when it's totally chill to walk around in groups while wearing disguises. What could go wrong?

LINKS

NIGHTFALL

nightfall.blackblogs.org

CONFLICT MN

conflictmn.blackblogs.org

BELLI RESEARCH INSTITUTE

belliresearchinstitute.com

NORTH STAR ANTIFA

northstarantifa.blackblogs.org

TC RADICAL CALENDAR

tcradical.wordpress.com